

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion and in view of the present amendment, is respectfully requested. Claim 24 has been amended. Claims 1, 5, 8, 11-12, and 14-23 have been cancelled. Claims 24-46 are pending and under consideration. Claims 24-46 have been indicated as allowed, such that only allowed claims remain in the application.

This amendment is believed to place the application in condition for allowance, and entry therefore is respectfully requested. In the alternative, entry of this amendment is requested as placing the application in better condition for appeal by, at least, reducing the number of issues outstanding.

Entry of Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116

The Applicants request entry of this Rule 116 Response because the amendment does not alter the scope of the claims and places the application at least into a better form for purposes of appeal. No new features or new issues are being raised.

The Manual of Patent Examining Procedures (M.P.E.P.) sets forth in Section 714.12 that “any amendment that would place the case either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal may be entered.” Moreover, Section 714.13 sets forth that “the Proposed Amendment should be given sufficient consideration to determine whether the claims are in condition for allowance and/or whether the issues on appeal are simplified.” The M.P.E.P. further articulates that the reason for any non-entry should be explained expressly in the Advisory Action.

I. Claim Objections

In the Office Action, at page 2, claims 12 and 24 were objected to due to informalities.

Claim 24 has been amended in response to these objections. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested and it is submitted that claim 24 is now in a condition suitable for allowance, as acknowledged by the Examiner.

Claim 12 has been cancelled. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, at pages 3-11, claims 1, 5, 8, 11-12, and 14-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barr et al. in view of Bracewell et al.

Claims 1, 5, 8, 11-12, and 14-23 have been cancelled. Accordingly, withdrawal of these § 103 rejections is respectfully requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication, at page 11, that claims 24-46 are allowed.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

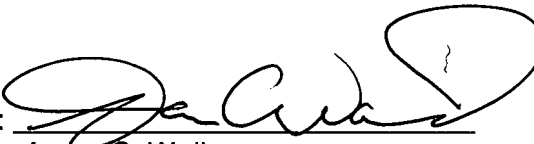
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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